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EXERCISES

AT THE

INSTALLATION

OF

Rev. William E. Parker,

AS

Pastor of the Congregational Church

OF

GLOVERSVILLE, N. Y.,

JULY 21st, 1876.

*Sermon by Rev. Henry H. H. H.*

STANDARD OFFICE, GLOVERSVILLE, N. Y.



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The church at Kingsboro, of which the Congregational Church in Gloversville is an offshoot, was organized in 1797. For a period of forty-eight years this church and society were blest by the pastoral labors of the celebrated Dr. Yale, and when his ministry closed in 1852, it had become strong enough for division into two vigorous branches. Seventy-eight members were therefore dismissed from the Kingsboro church in order to form the Congregational Church in Gloversville, which was organized by a council-duly convened on July 2d, 1852. The first pastor, Rev. Homer N. Dunning, commenced his labors immediately and was ordained pastor on the 2d of December following. A powerful revival occurred in the autumn of 1855, in consequence of which more than fifty persons were received into the church. Rev. Mr. Dunning remained until the 11th of December, 1864. The Rev. Charles Hill was installed on May 31st, 1865, and remained until August 12th, 1868.

The Rev. William A. McGinley accepted a call to the pastorate on the 18th of January, 1869, and resigned his charge on May 13th, 1874. Rev. Wm. E. Park the present pastor, accepted a call to the pastorate of this Church on January 7th, 1876. He began his ministrations on March 5th, and was installed on the 21st of June following.



## MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL.

GLOVERSVILLE, N. Y., June 21st, 1876.

Pursuant to letters missive from the Congregational Church in Gloversville, a council met in the above named Church, to examine, and if thought fit and expedient, to install Rev. Wm. E. Park as pastor of the Church.

There were present as members of the council, the following pastors and delegates. From the first Congregational Church in Albany, Dr. W. S. Smart, pastor, and brother D. A. Thomson delegate. From the First Congregational Church in Syracuse, Rev. Ovid Miner, delegate. From the Congregational Church in North Bennington, Vermont, Rev. L. C. Partridge, pastor, and brother H. D. Hall, delegate. From the First Congregational Church in Saratoga Springs, Rev. L. S. Rowland, pastor, and brother L. F. Packard, delegate. Also, Prof. Hiram Mead, D. D., of Oberlin, Ohio, and Rev. Wm. A. McGinley, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

Rev. Dr. Smart of Albany, was chosen Moderator and L. S. Packard of Saratoga Springs, Scribe.

The council was opened by prayer by the Moderator.

The correspondence relative to the settlement of the pastor elect was then read. On statement of the Moderator, followed by a statement from the candidate, the reading of the evidence of his dismissal from his former pastorate was omitted. On motion, the council proceeded to examine the candidate.

At request of the Moderator, the candidate gave a statement of his views on the general theological questions.

Also, at request, a statement of his religious experience, christian life, and reasons for entering the ministry.

On motion, the examination was arrested at this point, and the council voted to be by itself.

On motion, the council pronounced the examination of

the candidate satisfactory, and determined to proceed with the services of installation.

The Moderator and Scribe, together with the candidate, were made a committee to arrange the order of service. After conference, the Moderator reported the following order for service, which was adopted. The council then returned to the former place of sitting, and the Moderator reported the decision of the same, to proceed with the installation services at half-past seven o'clock. Also, the order of exercises for the evening. The council then adjourned to meet at half-past seven o'clock.

L. S. PACKARD, Scribe.

The council reassembled at seven and a half o'clock, pursuant to adjournment, and after having completed the installation services in accordance with the order above named, was dissolved.

WM. S. SMART, Moderator.

L. S. PACKARD, Scribe.

The council then adopted the following

#### ORDER OF SERVICES.

- I. Voluntary on the organ.
- II. Reading the minutes of the council by the Scribe.
- III. Anthem, "How Beautiful are Thy Dwellings."
- IV. The prayer of invocation was offered by the Rev. Ovid Miner of Syracuse.
- V. Portions of Scripture were then read by the Rev. L. C. Partridge of North Bennington, Vermont.
- VI. Anthem, "How Beautiful upon the Mountains."
- VII. Sermon, by Prof. Hiram Mead, D. D., of Oberlin, Ohio.

1 Corinthians, xii, 27: Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

In the gospel there are presented to us a succession of pictures in which the person of Jesus Christ in bodily form is always the central figure. In the closing period of his life especially is this true; as when, a little while before the crucifixion, he said, "Destroy this body;" as at the last supper when he took the bread and said, "This is my body;" at the crucifixion when the body of Christ was lifted up



and nailed to the cross; at the burial when the body was wrapped in its cerements and laid away; at the resurrection, when, again, Christ in bodily form appeared to his disciples.

In all these scenes Christ, as embodied, is prominent before us. But what became of the body of our Lord when he ascended?

Whatever we may say of the nature of the resurrection body—which, in many respects, differed so much from that which was crucified, still we must believe, that at his ascension, at least, the earthly body of Christ vanished. After this he became spiritually omnipresent, and yet, as the Apostle teaches us in the text, and in many other places, he is still embodied. Now we are apt to think that this is a mere poetical figure of speech, and does not mean just what it says, and so we pass it by without any earnest attempt to conceive of the Saviour in his present condition, and in his present relation, as really still embodied.

Let us remember then, first, as we come to an examination of our text, that it is not a mere metaphor: it is not a fanciful comparison, but a *fact*. Christians are really so related to Christ that they constitute a kind of body in which he dwells spiritually, as the human spirit dwells in the human body.

This was the Apostle's habitual conception of the church in its relation to Christ, and, hence, his frequent repetition of this thought, modified only by the connection in which it is placed: "For His body's sake, which is the church." "Head over all things to the church, which is his body." "The edifying of the body of Christ," that is, the church. That Christians "may grow up into Him who is the head, even Christ,"—"from whom the whole body" is "fitly joined together." "We, being many, are one body in Christ." "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of his bones."

Of course, the Apostle has in mind true Christians in their spiritual union. All real Christians are connected by a bond of peculiar sympathy. They have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and are at one in the great purpose for

which they live. They instinctively love each other. It is one of the best proofs that a person is a Christian, if he finds himself sympathetically drawn towards the friends of Christ. "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." Now all true Christians in the world, being thus the disciples of the same Lord, and in real sympathy with each other, constitute the true church of Christ. It matters not in what part of the world they live, by what name they may be called, or to what particular church organization they may belong. In this true church are included all that love Christ in sincerity in all the denominations: and all those who do not love Christ in any one of these churches, however high the pretensions of that church may be, and however "good and regular" their standing may be in it, all these mere nominal Christians, are not members of the true church, the body of Christ. Separating, then, in your thought the true disciples of our Lord from the multitude who bear the Christian name, and discerning their real unity, consider, now, how much is involved in the assertion that they constitute the "body of Christ."

I. True Christians, as constituting the body of Christ, manifest his personal presence among men.

We cannot easily conceive of persons without thinking of their embodiment and form. Even angels and glorified spirits possess, in our thought, some kind of shape, although we may hold, and try to imagine, that spirit has no shape. And as for human beings here in this world, they always come to our thought as embodied, although we know that the body, the mere structure of bone and flesh and blood, is not the person. These bodies serve as the means by which personal beings show themselves. When we see a person, (as we express it), we see only bodily organs that are animated and moved by the soul within. The eye, the tongue, the changing lines of the face, the position, the gesture, the whole animated frame reveal the presence of a living soul. Words are sometimes called "embodied thoughts," and again they are called the expressions of thoughts; so the living human frame is the embodiment of the human spirit,

and at the same time it is the expression, the revelation, to our organs of sense, of the presence of the spirit.

What the body is as a medium through which a living human soul is manifested, the church is as a medium for the manifestation of the personal presence of our Lord. When Christ dwelt here on earth, his human form, that which his disciples saw and by means of which he communicated his thoughts and feelings, manifested his personal presence. The personal Christ was manifest only where that human form was which he had taken upon himself. If one day he was with his disciples among the hills of Galilee, then was he personally absent from Judea. If he was in Jerusalem, then his friends sought in vain for him in Bethlehem or Nazareth. During those thirty-three years of his residence on earth, the personal Saviour was present to men, and appeared to men, only through that "marred visage" and bowed frame. But when at the ascension our Lord went away, when the body which had been crucified and had been again raised from the dead, was changed to a glorified body on his return to the skies, then must he needs show himself to men in a different way. "If I go away," said he, "I will come again to you." As if he had said, "If I no longer manifest myself to you through this familiar countenance and form, then I will manifest myself personally present in some other way." "How wilt thou" then "manifest thyself to us?" asked one of the disciples. Note the answer: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Then he abode in the tabernacle of his own flesh. But, thereafter, he chose to come nearer and pitch his tabernacle within the church, in the hearts of his disciples. The united and cemented affections of his followers constitute the temple in which he dwells, "a holy temple," a "habitation of God through the spirit." In Christ incarnate "God was manifest in the flesh." Just as really is Christ manifest in the church, because it is his "body." Not more evidently did the disciples perceive that our Lord was personally present when they heard his voice or saw his form, not more surely did

Thomas see that it was Christ that stood before him when he put his finger into the print of the nails that had pierced his hands and feet, than may we all see Christ to be personally present in any-one who is truly a member of this spiritual body.

It matters not where this Christian may be, or who he may be, whether American, Englishman, Indian, African, or Chinaman; where he is, there Christ is manifesting himself to the world through him, even as he once manifested himself to men by the various organs of his human frame.

Do you wonder at this, that the whole person of our Saviour should thus be manifested in a single Christian? But is this more mysterious than that a single organ of the human frame should reveal the presence of the entire person? When you clasp the hand of a friend in the dark, you are as sure of his presence as if you saw his entire body. The soul does not reside in any one organ of the body. You remember that the Apostle says that "if one member suffer," no matter how small that member, "all the members suffer with it." Experience tells us that when the tip of the finger, even, is in pain, the entire person is in pain. The filmiest nerve in the furthest extremity of the body represents not a part but the whole of the soul. Even so, the least of the members of Christ's body represents and manifests his entire person. The whole glorious brotherhood, indeed, is the body, but each one is a member. We are "members in particular" that is, each individual is a member.

II. The Church as the body of Christ reveals the mind of Christ.

There is such close connection and correspondency between the mind and the body, that, by some, the mind is supposed to fashion the body to its own character. They believe that every man's body, particularly, so far as respects the features,—is a kind of outgrowth or expression of the soul, as each species of plants is the outgrowth and expression of the kind of life which belongs to that species. So that, if we were keen enough in our perception, we might always read the character of a man in his physical frame. Indeed, is it not altogether probable that every

essential characteristic of the mind, if not every thought and feeling is revealed, without our intending it, in the conformation of the head, in the lines of the countenance, the changing involuntary expression of the eye and lips, in the gesture and even the gait? "So much more truth-telling than words, in fact, are these self-speaking muscles to those who have studied their dialect, that, as a current adage has it, language was given us to conceal our thoughts." Indeed, were we only intelligent enough, we should see in all the organs, structure and movements of the body, a kind of language, legible as our hand-writing, that, just as strangely, reveals the operations of the mind. And the human body of the Lord Jesus, when he was on earth, served the same purpose of giving expression to what was in his mind.

When the great painters have endeavored to delineate the human form and features of our Saviour, how carefully and earnestly have they sought to comprehend all the beauty and purity of his character, and to give expression to it in the portrait they put upon the canvass! It is their idea of his character that guides every touch of the pencil or the brush. Not a line or a shading is given, without meaning to reveal by it some feature of that wondrous soul. And in this we justify and commend them. They are doing by imitation only what our Lord himself did when he assumed the form of a man, and by his own divinely creative power so fashioned his own body as to make it, in all its features, expressive of the mind that was within him. He longed to reveal himself, and, therefore, we may well believe, that no less by form and attitude, gesture and mien, by the speaking eye and changing feature,—no less by these than by his words, he sought to show to men the divine thoughts and feelings that dwelt in him. He placed himself before men to be seen as well as heard. He was lifted up that he might be a spectacle. John said, "Behold the Lamb of God." Christ himself said, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of man be lifted up" that is, to be looked upon; so was made manifest through his human body the "mind that was in



the Lord Jesus." But when the familiar human form was received out of the disciples' sight, by the clouds above Mt. Olivet, it could no more serve as the medium of communication between God and man. In place of it our Lord has a bodily manifestation of another kind. Christians are now his body. Christ dwells in them. "Christ is formed within them." They have the spirit of Christ. "The same mind is in them that was in the Lord Jesus." "They grow up into him." "Their life is hid with Christ in God." "They live, yet not they, but Christ liveth in them." "Filled with the fullness of him who filleth all in all." Such are the scriptural expressions that clearly imply that the Lord Jesus dwells in, and expresses himself through, the Church as truly as he did through his human body of flesh and blood.

Christians therefore, so far as they are *Christians*, are revealing to the world the thoughts and desires, the mind of the Lord Jesus. Jesus speaks through them his very feeling. What he was wont to say when in the flesh by his sympathetic look, or gentle touch, or affectionate grasp, or tearful eye, or helping hand, or comforting word, now he must needs say through the organs and features of this body which is the Church. These "living epistles known and read of all men" are written all over with his thoughts, just as these same thoughts were once written upon his face.

But, perhaps you will say here, "if this is so, the Church must be the inspired and infallible exponent of the mind and will of God. If Christ lives in his members and manifests his mind through them, is not each Christian more than a priest, or a prophet? Do we not thus exalt the human to a superhuman rank?" Very far from it, for, alas! there are few Christians, indeed, who do not mingle countless imperfections with all their Christian graces and attainments, and no soul is so placid and clear, that, like the unrippled lake, it will give back a perfect image of the face of our Lord. And yet, again, even so far as Christ is present and manifest in the Christian's heart, yet, as the apostle confessed, it is not the Christian that lives, but Christ that lives, in him. The Saint is not

exalted so much as he is humbled. When Christian truth and Christ-like feeling are expressed in any life we are not to forget that it is not the Christian, but Christ who puts forth this expression. And, besides, how shall we know in any case whether the spirit that the professed believer manifests is the real spirit of Christ except by comparing this manifestation with the standard given us in the life and teaching of our Lord?

It is not possible, therefore, for any Christian to become a prophet to us, or to assume divine authority. The Saviour will never be eclipsed by his disciples. He will rather be manifested by them, brought into yet more distinctness of view. *They* will be less and less conspicuous, the more they become the manifestation of Christ, even as the best and most transparent telescopic glass is not itself seen when some heavenly body is brought, by it, to our sight.

However, let us still insist upon it, Christians are Christians only so far as they embody and reveal Christ to men; and any one who does not in some way exhibit the Saviour's spirit is not a member of this body. For, by the tones of the voice, or the expression of the countenance, or the general <sup>character</sup> term of his life a Christ-like spirit will certainly reveal itself. Oh, my brethren, let us not deceive ourselves! If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is certainly none of his. There are Christless professors of religion, but there are no Christless Christians. "Wherefore, henceforth, know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now, henceforth, know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and all things have become new."

III. But not only do Christians manifest the presence and speak the mind of Christ, but these members of Christ's body are the instruments for the execution of his will.

The body is the servant of the soul. Each limb and organ is made to do its bidding. In the first place the very power of motion is in the soul. It is not the muscles, but the will that lifts the foot or wings the arm. The muscles

with no will to energize them are as quiet and powerless as the wheels of the steam-engine without steam.

Then, again, the kind of motion depends upon the power of choice. Just where our feet shall carry us, just what the hands shall seize upon, the eye look at, the ear listen to, the mouth speak—all this it is for the mind to determine. There is not an organ of the human frame which is not manifestly created for the purpose of ministering in some way to the appetites and wishes of the soul within it. The eye of itself does not wish to see, but you wish to see with your eye, the eye being used by you as an instrument, as really as is the telescope. Your tongue and other organs of speech have no independent desire to utter articulate sounds, but you wish to utter sounds, and you use these organs, just as the musician uses a flute or a trumpet. Your hands have no purpose or wish of their own to lift weights or handle tools, but you wish to lift the weight or handle the tool, and you use your hands for this purpose, just as the mechanic uses the various instruments of his trade. Such is the relation of the body to the thinking and acting soul that animates it. Such was the Saviour's body when here on earth. He not only manifested his personal presence, and revealed his mind by means of it, but he also executed his will. Those blessed feet that walked the holy fields of Palestine, bearing the Master where he would, until, "for our advantage they were nailed upon the bitter cross," those hands that used to ply the tools of his trade, that ministered to his own and others' wants, and were always ready to lift up the bowed down and bring relief to the distressed; that tongue that was always speaking "a word in season to him that is weary," and continually dispensed instruction to listening disciples;—all these organs of his human body were but the instruments by which he accomplished the purpose of his mission here to men. These are now laid aside and he uses them no more. No more gracious words fall from his lips; no more benedictions and gifts of healing are dispensed by those blessed hands. He has taken to himself other bodily organs for the accomplishment of his purposes. The *Church*



is his body, and the members of the Church are "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." These are now the eyes, the hands, the feet and the tongue of the Master, by which he ministers blessings to men.

Here it is, my friends, that we touch the deep, radical idea of real Christian service. So long as we conceive ourselves to be independent, obeying the dictates of our own judgment, executing the purposes that our own hearts conceive, however much we may at the same time study Christian duty, and aim to do right, we are not, in the fullest sense, the servants of Christ. No: not till the very love of Christ shall throb in our inmost spirits, not till the very will of Christ shall energize our powers and set them in motion, as each man's will, by direct electric action vitalizes and moves each organ, do we become the members of Christ. The feet of Christ must be moved by the direct volition of Christ. The lips of Christ must articulate *his* impassioned thoughts. That professed disciple is not, therefore, united to our Lord, so that he may be called a member of his flesh and his bones, if the will of the Master acting upon and working through his will, does not itself directly prompt and animate his aims and efforts!

Do not, my friends, for a moment allow yourselves to imagine that this conception of the matter is something fanciful. I am not dealing with fancies or figures of speech, but with *facts*. Christ *is* formed within us, and *does* live in us, and *does* energize us, "except we be reprobate." We live, yet not we, but Christ that liveth in us. You know how the electric current from the battery of the telegraphist is sent directly through all the connected wires. It is not necessary that the operator in New York should take the message that is sent from Boston and send it on by a new electric current to Washington. Rather, the lines need only to be connected at New York, and the same electric current runs through the whole. Somewhat so the Christian's will needs only to be vitally connected by true faith with the will of Christ, and then Christ's Spirit will immediately energize the Christian's active powers, as his mind, when he was here on earth, immediately moved his hands

and feet. This is the true ideal of the Christian Church, that it shall be the body *fully taken possession of by the Spirit of Christ, every member and every organ in quick vital connection and in full play; none dormant and none paralyzed, but all permeated and infused with energizing love shed abroad in the heart, and circulating through the heart, into every artery and vein, thus giving life to the whole.*

I can not stop here, as I would like, in order to dwell upon the excellency and beauty of this new mode of divine manifestation. We see, at once, how much superior is the Church, as a body, to that which our Saviour had when here on earth. It may be well enough for artists to exercise all their powers of genius in order that they may bring out on canvass or in marble, the form, features and lineaments of the incarnate Christ; but it is remarkable, that the record we have in the gospels makes no mention of any extraordinary beauty or majesty as belonging to his person, and, indeed, says nothing that calls attention to his physical appearance. The biography of Christ is singular in this respect; it is almost the only biography in all literature that does not in some way describe the person or features of its subject. One reason for this, no doubt, is that the church might have no temptation to preserve, for the purpose of idolatrous worship, any likeness of his human person. But another may be that this body of his flesh, "without form or comeliness," was so inferior to that which he has since put on. While no glory is ascribed to that earthly body, the Scriptures almost revel in descriptions of the glory of the Church. That temple far outrivals Solomon's: "a spiritual house" built of "living stones," upon "the foundation of the prophets and Apostles," "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;" "in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple," and is "a habitation of God through the spirit;" "the house of God, the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth!" Such a temple is that which Christ now inhabits! There is no such magnificence or glory ascribed to that which he dwelt in during his earthly life, which he said

the Jews might destroy and he would "build it again in three days."

And then again, as an agency for the accomplishment of his redemptive plans, how much superior the Church to the body of his flesh! The hands and feet of the physical body are involuntary instruments, moving only as they are moved by the soul. They are like the wheels and levers of a machine. But in the body of which Christians are members, each organ has a life and consciousness of its own. Christians are not machines or parts of machines, but voluntary agents still, acting just as freely as before, although it be God that worketh in and through them "to will and to do of His good pleasure." And this is the wonder and glory of it, that millions upon millions of separate free agents, without losing their individuality at all, can become so assimilated to each other and so sympathetic with the Saviour that, ultimately, they shall freely act together with all the harmony and accuracy of the most nicely adjusted mechanism!

Moreover, observe that in the Church our Lord is personally present everywhere, wherever Christians are. Limited to no spot, as then, he is now present in every Christian congregation over the wide earth, in every Christian household, in every Christian heart. For Christians are one—united together as the members of the body are, and hence Christ must be personally present with each, as your soul is present in every nerve of the body. So does Christ prophesy with literal truth, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

And now he preaches, not to a single congregation only, gathered on some Gallilean hill-top, but through his ministers, who are his mouth, he preaches, to-day,—to *you*, if you are hearing the truth spoken with any degree of his love,—and to all the millions that, each Lord's day, are gathered to hear the word of God.

And now he brings relief to the distressed, healing to the sick, comfort to the wretched, faith to the doubting, life to the dead, not to individual cases, one by one, as they were reached by him when here in the flesh, but to multi-

tudes upon multitudes to whom he ministers through benevolent associations, Christian missionaries, and countless private laborers who are everywhere trying to execute his will.

Oh, when every member of this body shall have become obedient to the Saviour's will; when there are none dormant or paralyzed; none who through want of practice, fail in quick and nimble facility; none who, in their independent freedom, refuse to act in obedience to the divine volition, what a mighty power will not Christ exert through this body of his! Oh, if his divine energy were once to get complete possession of all the means and agencies that his servants hold, what rapid and sweeping successes might he not achieve! If the Church, "clear as the sun, fair as the moon and terrible as an army with banners," were only well disciplined and obedient to the Captain of our salvation, what splendid conquests might not immediately be gained! When the Church is sanctified, how soon will the world be redeemed!

Brethren, we see, each of us, what is our responsibility; for when we are each of us filled with Christian love and trained by obedient practice, so that Christ can easily work in and through us, then we shall each in his sphere have a divine power; and we know not how much the humblest may be able to do for the salvation of those who are about us. If we are feeble, it is only because Christ is not in us.

But if this indwelling of Christ is necessary even for those members of the Church who have the least responsibility, it is most emphatically a necessity to the pastor. He, certainly, will be efficient in his office only so far as he is moved by the spirit of the Master. Let our brother, then, who is, to night, invested anew with pastoral responsibility, realize anew his utter dependence upon the power of Christ in him. He cannot feel too much the weight of his responsibility, nor cry out with too much self-distrust, "who is sufficient for these things?" But when he remembers that he is also one of the members of Christ's body and is wielded by his divine power, he will gladly

‘glory in his own infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon him.’

‘For this cause,’ dear brother, ‘we bow our knees’ unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your heart by faith; that, being rooted and grounded in love, you may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, (that passeth knowledge) that you may be filled with all the fullness of God !’

VIII. The following hymn of welcome was then sung by the Congregation, standing :

We bid thee welcome in the name  
Of Jesus, our exalted Head ;  
Come as a servant : so he came,  
And we received thee in his stead.

Come as a teacher, sent from God,  
Charged his whole counsel to declare ;  
Lift o’er our ranks the prophet’s rod,  
While we uphold thy hands with prayer.

Come as a messenger of peace,  
Filled with the Spirit, fired with love !  
Live to behold our large increase,  
And die to meet us all above.

IX. The prayer of installation was then offered by Prof. Hiram Mead.

X. Charge to the Pastor, by William S. Smart, D. D., of Albany.



## CHARGE TO THE PASTOR.

By William S. Smart, D. D., of Albany.

DEAR BROTHER:—This day God's will is made clear to you. Through the call of this church, by your deliberate and prayerful acceptance of their invitation, and with the consent of the sister churches, the divine purpose is manifest that here you are to "make full proof of your ministry." You are now the Pastor of this Church, and these are your people. A stranger cannot express those mingled feelings of joy and solemn responsibility, which the institution of this relation must awaken in your hearts. You are God's answer to their prayer, for one to go in and out among them and to break unto them the bread of life. Sent of God, you are welcomed in the Lord. We join with you in prayer that the Head of the church may in his blessing upon your ministry among this people, "grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfill all thy counsel."

I am, according to custom, to address you a few words concerning the work you have undertaken. I can say nothing with which you are not already familiar, through experience and study of the word of God. You are not a novice and I cannot address you "as being such an one as Paul the aged." "I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." Neither can I come like Samuel bringing holy oil to anoint your king upon this hill of Zion; but as Jonathan blessed David and sent him away with brotherly sympathy and the prophesy of a loving heart concerning his future career, so may I drop some words to cheer and strengthen your soul for duty.

You are now the Shepherd of this flock. The title is suggestive of the nature of the office and its duties. It reminds us of the loving care, the unwearying watchfulness, the patient toil, and the self sacrifice which make the

Christian ministry at once the most humble and the most exalted service; whose severity of exaction is more than exceeded by the splendor of its rewards.

The dignity of the Christian ministry is seen in the noble men whose names are associated with it.

In the old dispensation of types, Abel was a Shepherd, and Jacob, and Moses, and David; but the luster of these names was a faint fore-shadowing of the glory which was conferred upon this office, when Christ condescended to become "the Shepherd and Bishop of souls." "I am the good Shepherd," said the Lord of glory, "the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life for the sheep." Surely "it is enough for the disciple to be as his master and the servant as his Lord." Surely we may count it an honor and a high privilege to serve in this office after Christ and to bestow upon its humble duties our richest gifts and best strength. For the good Shepherd when he left his infant church, "as sheep among wolves," to ascend unto his glory did not lay aside this duty. His love and watch is still over and with his church. His parting injunction to Peter was, "Feed my sheep." "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some *Pastors* and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." And since that day he has not ceased to testify his love for the church by the faithful ministry he has raised up to beseech men in his stead to be reconciled to God.

It is a goodly company to which we are joined "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ," and it is our sweet privilege to draw inspiration from their success as well as instruction from their labors. They were men like ourselves, compassed with many infirmities, who by the grace of God "out of weakness were made strong." They have finished their course and gone up from us, yet like a cloud of witnesses they crowd the horizons and exhort us to run

with patience. To-day we salute the august host with our swords and they salute us with their crowns. The same God who was mighty in them, can make us sufficient for these things, which seem often to be beyond all hope of our achievement.

The dignity of the christian ministry may also be gathered from its purpose. It is to save men. This is the work to which Christ gave himself. Our ministry should be steadfast to this single aim, and so will possess a unity of purpose and directness of effort, which is not equalled in any other calling. So far as the end of your labors is concerned, we have not many things to do, but one. "This one thing I do," says Paul, "I press toward the mark—Christ Jesus." "I determined not to know anything among you save Christ Jesus and Him crucified." This singleness of aim might be considered as imparting narrowness to the work of the christian ministry, as it is by some, were it not so conspicuously high above all other objects of human effort, as to subordinate all other ends of life as means to its accomplishment. In this work, and demanded by it to the highest success, there is room for the exercise of all those gifts of the intellect and graces of the heart with which the human character is adorned. Every species of learning, every gift of genius, the entirest manhood cannot be devoted to a higher end, and may find ample scope, in the work of rescuing men from lives of sin, and perfecting immortal souls in holiness.

Upon the seal of Harvard University, that most ancient and honorable seat of learning, our fathers, who believed in an educated ministry, inscribed this legend, "Pro Christo et Ecclesiae,"—for Christ and the Church. What talent, what cultus, what power of a full manhood is there, which does not gain added glory when this is inscribed upon it; for it is not the gold that sanctifies the temple, but the temple the gold. Genius in the service of the devil is degraded, and if its works survive, it is only to poison the sweet fountains of human happiness, but the weakest effort, and the humblest talent that is given to God helps to lift



humanity above its degrading bondage to sin, and to swell the happy chorus which bright spirits sing forever and ever. It gladdens the earth with truth and righteousness, and people's heaven with spirits of just men made perfect.

The dignity of the Christian ministry is seen also in the permanence of its results. Much of the work of the pastor is repetitious and seemingly confined to the present necessities of his people. In the pulpit, it is line upon line, precept upon precept, a fitting of the same blessed truths to the changing conditions and moods of the congregation. At the baptismal font, at the marriage altar, at the grave the same duty repeats itself in endless succession. In comforting the sick, in encouraging the weak, in counseling the perplexed, in many words of secret and private advice, as well as in the social circle and on public occasions, the faithful pastor is all things to all men, expending much of his vitality, as a helper and sympathizer with men in the burdens and business of life. It goes on ceaselessly. It is never done. But its influence does not cease when its earthly ends are gained. In this round of personal contact with the present needs of men, deep impressions are made, and character moulded into truer forms. Beneath this daily eddying of our lives, in little circles which seem to be enclosed in days or years, there runs the drift of the mighty unseen current of personal influence, bearing both helper and the helped, nearer to the kingdom of God.

But it is not here in the glad recognition of our service and its power, by ourselves or others, that the great reward lies. We labor for eternity. Our toil is for the "kingdom that shall endure." We may well spare the applause of men, so there be honor for us from the King above. It is this hope which shall set our work in its true light, and save it from becoming either common-place or temporal in its spirit. To deal with earthly interest after a worldly fashion, or merely for a worldly purpose, is foreign to our high calling; but to touch all of earth that is pure, to deal sympathetically with the present needs and joys and griefs of mankind, with heaven forever in our eye, and an ear

that catches the rhythm of the spirit, beating soft and sweet, beneath the noisy tumult of earth, this will be to come near to the perfect One,—to Him who has taught us to find God in simplest things, and grand opportunities to serve him in the ordinary path of earthly lives.

I know I do but echo the deepest aspiration of your heart, when I charge you to make Christ the exemplar of your ministry. He was the Divine made self-evident. He was God translated into the language of human life. The gain of religion in his hands is that it becomes diviner, in becoming more human. To have his wide sympathy with nature and with man, and his keen vision of the spiritual and eternal; to learn to use the commonest things to illustrate the divinest mysteries; to touch nothing without finding God within; to turn all things without cant or strangeness to spiritual uses; to reach God on the one hand, and man with his weakness and want on the other; this indeed would make us, after Him, and in lesser degree, blessings to the world, quickeners of dead souls, messengers of glad tidings, and true evangelists of the kingdom of Heaven.

I charge you brother, to preach this sweet, real, living Christ and you shall minister to human wants, even beyond your fondest expectation. Men weary of us, and the endless repetition of our partial thoughts, but they never weary of the eternal freshness and beauty of Christ, if so be that they may catch the note of a living Christ in our preaching. In this work we are not to be mere scientists and theologians, forever pulling this flower of our humanity to pieces that we may analyze and distribute its parts into an orderly system of divine love. Love and system have their place, but they are not the vital thing. The voice of a living love, the note of Him who is mighty to save, must be heard in our preaching. We are to be witnesses of his resurrection and in the proclamation of this truth of an everliving Christ, we have with the Apostles a power denied even to the preaching of Jesus. Christ preached well. None ever excelled Him. He preached the kingdom of God, and a glorious kingdom he made it both by word and

deed. No such ideal had ever before, or has ever since, been held up to the gaze of the world. But this glorious proclamation of the kingdom received small acceptance, until after his death and resurrection, the whole gospel was lighted up with the new doctrine of his triumph over death; and Peter, taking this for the introduction, body and conclusion of his Pentecostal sermon, made more men christians in one day, than had the Lord Jesus in the whole of his ministry. Henceforth the Apostles made this the great theme of their preaching. They made men to "see the king in his beauty," and so to see "the land which is afar off." They did not neglect the humanities and righteousness of the kingdom. They discoursed largely of that which Christ in his preaching had made forever fair; they loved to dwell upon the Cross, and the saving efficacy of His blood, but everywhere in the forefront, the emphatic thing, the one absolute indispensable faith, the keystone of the arch of gospel truth, they placed the living Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "With great power everywhere gave the Disciples witness of the resurrection of the Lord."

At once it inspired the deepest enthusiasm and loyalty. It met all wants. All hope rested down upon Him; all work looked to Him; and all strength came from Him. It was this sublime conception of a salvation resting entirely, and day by day, and forever, upon the living person of the mighty, the everlasting Christ, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," which gave to Christianity its first great triumphs, and it is such preaching vitalized by a real and living Christ that shall have any large success to-day. For the essential creed is Christ, and the essential theology is that Christ saves, and the only hope with which a human heart can be satisfied is, that Christ will save.

None need this deep abiding sense of his presence and power, more than the faithful, laborious, often discouraged pastor. It lightens the burdens which crush the heart with their insupportable weight, and nerves him for efforts which appear to be beyond human power. None need to be able to say more surely, "I know Him whom I have believed,"

than we, who are to spend and be spent, in efforts to make men see their need, and accept the salvation a divine Saviour offers. For ourselves and our people, for faithfulness and success, for strength and comfort, we may well join in Rutherford's prayer. "O! for a fairer and nearer and more direct sight of Christ. O! that he would break down the old narrow vessels of these narrow, shallow souls, and make fair, wide, broad souls, to hold a sea and full tide, flowing over all its banks of Christ's love."

Dear Brother, in Christ and with Christ and for Christ do your work here, and your ministry shall be blessed; It will be a ministry patient and sympathetic in spirit, broad and comprehensive in method, and divine and eternal in results. It will be your highest joy now, to be making the path of life brighter and easier for many pilgrims, and to meet them rejoicing in heaven will be joy to your heart forever and ever.

"Behold says He who was dead and is alive forever more, the Amen, the faithful and true witness: Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be."

XI. Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. L. S. Rowland of Saratoga Springs

## The Right Hand of Fellowship.

By Rev. L. S. Rowland.

I could hardly be called to a more grateful service, my brother, than that imposed upon me by the Council of welcoming you to the fellowship of the churches which we represent. The memories of the past connected with your native Andover where some of the pleasantest years of my life were spent ; the picture of the dear old Seminary which your presence brings so vividly to mind ; the thought of your honored father, from whom I received some of the most quickening influences that ever entered into my life, and my debt of gratitude to whom I would gladly pay, if in no other way, at least, in service and affection to his son, these thoughts combined with what I know of yourself, of your character and culture, of your qualifications for the christian ministry and of your success in it, make my words of welcome to-night, I assure you, something more than the formal utterance of official duty, but warm them through and through with the fervor of personal feeling.

But I must not speak specially for myself, but in the name of these churches. It is often urged as a reproach against our simple puritan polity, that it furnishes no adequate tie for binding together its ministers and churches. But may we not ask in reply, what tie can be stronger than that of christian fellowship ? And what need of the external iron bands of ecclesiasticism where this spiritual union exists, as it always should exist, between christian churches and christian ministers ? It is this tie of spiritual fellowship that we emphasize in our welcome to you to-night. We receive you to our hearts. We throw around you the arms of our christian affection. We assure you of our christian sympathy and of our desire and prayer for your best success in the new work to which you are called. And if



I mistake not, you will find something in the peculiarity of your position here that will make this thought of the fellowship of the churches doubly precious to you. You will soon find, if you have not discovered it already, that Congregationalism in New York is something quite different in prestige and influence from what it is in New England. Stayed in its natural progress at the hills of Berkshire through the strange policy of the fathers, save as here and there some wave higher and stronger than the rest over-leaped the barrier, you will find instead of the thickly planted pilgrim churches of your native region, only a few christian bodies bearing the name you love, and those few separated from each other by scores of miles, and sometimes struggling for a foothold against almost overwhelming odds. If your experience shall be like my own, however pleasant your relationship to your christian brethren of other names, you will feel an occasional hunger for that nearer intimacy that can be found in perfection only between the members of the same ecclesiastical family, but which our wide separation from each other makes impossible to us. Do not doubt that the bond of fellowship exists, although it may lack some of the means for external manifestation. If you shall feel oppressed at times by the sense of isolation, if you shall miss, as you doubtless will, that constant intercourse with your brethren in the ministry to which you have been accustomed, you may still feel assured that our sympathies are flowing out toward you through the leagues that separate us, and that we bear you and your work on our hearts however little of personal intercourse may be possible between us. And this same thought, you may be sure, makes it doubly pleasant to us to welcome a new laborer to our meagre ranks. It is like the coming of a timely re-enforcement to a battle-wearied and scattered army. We shall all be made the stronger that this vacancy is filled and so well filled. With such a helper in the general field we shall feel like girding ourselves anew for our special service.

We are glad to welcome to this responsible post and to this honored church one so thoroughly equipped, one with

such qualifications of mind and heart, both natural and acquired, one coming to the work in the maturity of his powers, and bringing with him such a freight of valuable experience gathered in former successful service. We welcome you all the more heartily from the proof given us in your brilliant examination this afternoon, of your soundness in the faith and of the thoroughness of your christian experience. We are glad to feel, and to give utterance to the feeling, that there is no point of weakness either in your theology or your character, either in your views of christian polity or of ministerial duty, to give us the slightest anxiety with regard to the results of your ministry here, but everything, on the other hand, to inspire us with confidence that in committing to you this sacred and responsible trust, we are giving it into safest hands. We can sympathize most heartily with that growing ignorance with reference to the profounder themes of theology to which you confessed this afternoon, for with regard to them we are none of us so wise as we once were. But born as you were in the theological purple, we are certain that you will not fail to do honor to your lineage by constant progress in every line of christian truth that may be made of practical service to your people.

With these reasons for giving special emphasis to the tie that unites us, and for confidence in you as an earnest and able christian minister, in behalf of the council and of these churches, I extend to you this hand of fellowship. We bid you welcome to our number in the name of the Lord. We welcome you to our pulpits and to our homes. We give you place in our sympathies, in our affections and in our prayers. May God make you successful in building up this church of Christ, and in winning souls to the Saviour. May he keep you long in this blessed work of the Gospel, and at last, having fought the good fight and finished your course and kept the faith, may you receive as your reward in that day from the Lord, the righteous Judge, a crown of righteousness spangled thick with the jeweled seals of your ministry.

XII. Anthem, Remember, O Lord.

XIII. The Address to the People was then delivered by the Rev. Wm. A. McGinley of Brooklyn, former pastor of this church. We regret that we are unable to obtain a copy of this interesting address, for publication.

XIV. The congregation then arose and sang the following hymn to the tune of Old Hundred :

With Heavenly power, O Lord defend,  
Him whom we now to thee commend ;  
Thy faithful messenger secure ;  
And make him to the end endure.

Gird him with all sufficient grace,  
Direct his feet in paths of peace ;  
Thy truth and faithfulness fulfill,  
And arm him to obey thy will.

XV. The services were closed with benediction by the pastor.



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